

**MINUTES
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)
TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE (TCC)
REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
MARCH 14, 2007**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) was held **Wednesday, March 14, 2007**, at the Market Street Buffet and Bakery, 2525 S. York Street, Gastonia, NC.

Members Present:

Ben Blackburn	City of Lowell, TCC Chairman
Kevin Krouse	City of Bessemer City, TCC Vice Chairman
Wilce Martin	Town of Stanley, Public Works Director
Steve Baucom	Town of Cramerton, Planner
David Kahler	Town of Dallas, Comm. Dev. Administrator
Steve Miller	Town of Dallas, Town Manager
Barry Webb	City of Belmont, City Manager
Don Lowe	City of Gastonia, City Traffic Engineer
Jack Kiser	City of Gastonia, Director of Planning
David Williams	Gaston County, Director of Planning
Marc Bolick	Gaston EDC, Project Adm.
Margaret Taylor	Gaston County, Access Transp. Director
Anne Wilkes	Gaston County, Access Transp. Asst. Dir.
Hank Graham	Gaston MPO, Principal Transportation Planner
Randi Philbeck	Gaston MPO, Transportation Planner I
Bernie Yacobucci	Gaston MPO, Transportation Planner I
Cass Roberts	Gaston MPO, Administrative Assistant III
Shannon Ransom	NCDOT, Gaston MPO Coordinator
Mike Holder	NCDOT, Division Engineer
Byron Engle	NCDOT, Deputy Div. Traffic Eng.

Others Present:

Joe Gates	Town of Cramerton, Intern
Brett Wallace	URS Corporation, Transportation Planner

Members with absences in 2007:

Town of McAdenville	(Jan. - 1)
Town of Spencer Mountain	(Jan. - 1)
City of Mt. Holly	(Mar. - 1)

1. Set Agenda, Presenter: Ben Blackburn, TCC Chair

Mr. Blackburn asked if there was any new business or any additions to add to the agenda? There were none.

Mr. Krouse made a motion to set the agenda with Mr. Webb seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Determination of Quorum, Presenter: Ben Blackburn, TCC Chair

It was determined that there was a quorum present.

3. Approval of Minutes, Presenter: Ben Blackburn, TCC Chair

Mr. Blackburn entertained a motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2007 as presented. Mr. Martin stated that his first name was spelled incorrectly in the minutes and should be corrected to Wilce. Mrs. Roberts made a note of the change.

Mr. Webb made a motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2007 with the name correction as presented with Mr. Krous seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Introduction of Guests, Presenter: Ben Blackburn, TCC Chair

There were no new guests.

5. Public Comment Period, Presenter: Ben Blackburn, TCC Chair

There were no public comments.

6. Gaston Urban Area MPO 2007-2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Presenter: Hank Graham, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner

Mr. Graham stated that attached in the agenda package is the proposed 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Fiscal Year 2007-2008. The purpose of this document is to outline the tasks to be undertaken by MPO staff in the coming year and the amount of funding it will take to complete those tasks.

Mr. Graham stated that the total money in Table 1 represents the two grants received by the MPO each year. The finalized work program must be received by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) no later than June 1, 2007 and needs to be adopted at the March 27, 2007 TAC meeting. The due date for draft UPWP is May 1, 2007.

Mr. Graham continued by stating that NCDOT has authorized a PL funding allocation of \$250,022.00 with \$34,800 for the 5303 Transit Funds. Staff proposes to request authorization to use the un-obligated fund balance to complete many necessary work projects and the following are some of the projects and emphasis areas that have been identified for the upcoming year:

1. Update the Community Transportation Services Plan (CTSP),
2. Continue to strengthen and improve our regional transportation involvement,
3. Continue to work with the Gastonia Engineering Department to complete functional designs for thoroughfares on the Thoroughfare Plan,
4. Improve our Public Involvement/Participation and Environmental Justice efforts,
5. Complete a county-wide bicycle and pedestrian trail and greenway data base system,
6. Continue to coordinate with NCDOT to obtain funding of highest priority projects.

Mr. Webb asked about II-D-3, Special Studies, where there are activities currently underway such as the Belmont-Mt. Holly Loop and the Gastonia-Mt. Holly Connector corridor studies/functional designs and that additional functional designs will be pursued. He thought that functional designs should have been completed by now. Mr. Kiser stated that he would check with Felix Pruitt, City of Gastonia Director of Engineering, to see if these functional designs can be completed or would it be to our advantage to hire outside consultants.

Mr. Webb made a motion to approve the proposed 2007-2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with the understanding that the plan can be amended at a later date. Mr. Bolick seconded the motion with the motion passing unanimously.

7. Thoroughfare Plan Map Amendments, Presenter: Hank Graham, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner

Garden Parkway Name Change

Mr. Graham stated that in November, 2006, the North Carolina Turnpike Authority voted to change the name of the Gaston East-West Connector to the Garden Parkway and asked that in the spirit of conformity, that the TCC and TAC approve the amendment to the Gaston Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan Map for this name change.

Mr. Graham added that the original Gaston East-West Connector was split into two sections. One section was north of Dallas and that section today, with approving this amendment, will be known as the 321 Bypass. The other section is the Garden Parkway which will connect from I-85 to I-485.

Southridge Parkway Extension – Functional Design

Mr. Graham stated that this map amendment to the Gaston Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan involves the addition and inclusion of Southridge Drive. NCDOT has completed a functional design for Southridge Drive in Bessemer City for the Southridge Industrial Park and the Dole Plant. Mr. Graham added that there have been discussions to extend the Southridge Parkway into Bessemer City proper, but there is no funding at

this time, but that it could be added to the Thoroughfare Plan as an unfunded project. Mr. Bolick stated that this extension would make this area more attractive and functional. He added that the county would not consider building this extension this year.

Mr. Blackburn entertained a motion to approve the Garden Parkway name change and the Southridge Parkway Extension functional design. Mr. Kiser made a motion to approve with Mr. Miller seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Methodology for Funding – Use of Transportation Planning Funds (104F Grant Monies), Presenter: Bernie Yacobucci, Transportation Planner I

Mr. Yacobucci stated that MPO staff is currently developing a methodology for the use of Planning (PL) 104F Funds. Additional criteria would involve projects having greater weight if local governments contribute more than the required minimum match along with a possible sub-allocation policy for locally based transportation planning projects using sub-allocated Planning Funds as prescribed in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Mr. Kiser stated that there needs to be a minimum and maximum for a project in any given year. Mr. Holder added that each project should be evaluated on its own merit.

Mr. Blackburn asked members if they have any comments to please direct them to Mr. Yacobucci.

Mr. Yacobucci added that there are draft guidelines attached for review in the agenda package.

9. Adopted 07-13 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Presenter: Randi A. Philbeck, Transportation Planner I

Ms. Philbeck stated that the 2007-2013 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) was adopted by the NCDOT Board of Transportation on March 1, 2007. Presently, NCDOT has put one more project, Southridge Parkway, into the STIP since staff mailed out the agenda. There is also one change in Project - 5007, Milepost 24 to Milepost 27 – a pavement rehabilitation based on priority needs and this project will be added with construction in FY 07.

Mr. Blackburn entertained a motion to adopt 07-13 State Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Krouse made a motion to approve with Mr. Webb seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. County-wide/MPO-wide Greenway Plan, Presenter: Randi A. Philbeck, Transportation Planner I

Ms. Philbeck stated that there will be a joint meeting of the Gaston MPO Bicycle/ Pedestrian Facilities Committee and the Gaston 2012 Quality of Life Committee on Thursday, March 22nd at 6:00 pm in the Elm Room at Gaston Memorial Hospital. The purpose of the meeting will be to get an update of where the local municipalities are with their greenway planning, to look at inter-municipality connections, and when these connections could possibly be made.

11. Draft Franklin Blvd. Corridor Plan Concept, Presenter: Hank Graham, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner

Mr. Graham stated that the handout presented in the agenda is of the draft conceptual designs for the proposed Franklin Boulevard Corridor Study. It is for information and discussion only.

12. New Business

13. Other Business

- a) Gastonia Express 85-X Ridership Report. The report for January shows ridership of 5,094, an increase of 299 riders since January, 2006, an increase of 2,004 riders since 2006, an increase of 3,261 riders since January 2004, and an increase of 3,151 riders since January 2005.
- b) Gastonia Transit Expansion Study – Update – The kickoff meeting was on January 20, 2007. A draft transit expansion survey is attached for review.
- c) Gaston County Freight Study Kick-off – the working group will hold its kickoff meeting on March 21, 2007 in the Garland Center, Room 131.
- d) Gaston MPO Site Plan Review Reminder – Ms. Philbeck urged all members of local governments to allow the Gaston MPO staff the opportunity to review development proposals in order to protect the necessary rights-of-ways for those thoroughfares designated on the adopted Thoroughfare Plan.

14. Adjournment

There being no other business, Mr. Krouse made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Mr. Miller seconding the motion, and the meeting was adjourned unanimously at 1:25 pm